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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 22 December 2015

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/70/479)*]

70/224. Towards global partnerships: a principle-based approach to enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 55/215 of 21 December 2000, 56/76 of 11 December 2001, 58/129 of 19 December 2003, 60/215 of 22 December 2005, 62/211 of 19 December 2007, 64/223 of 21 December 2009, 66/223 of 22 December 2011 and 68/234 of 20 December 2013,

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of this Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Recalling these objectives, particularly with regard to developing partnerships through the provision of greater opportunities to the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society in general so as to enable them to contribute to the realization of the goals and programmes of the Organization, in particular in the pursuit of sustainable development and the eradication of poverty,

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Underlining the fact that cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, including the private sector, and all partnerships using the United Nations name or emblem shall serve the purposes and principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and shall be undertaken in a manner that maintains and promotes the integrity, impartiality and independence of the Organization,

Welcoming the contribution of all relevant partners, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations, philanthropic organizations, academia and civil society, which respect and support, as appropriate, the core values and principles of the United Nations, to the implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits and their reviews in the economic, social, environmental and related fields, as well as the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals,

Emphasizing that cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector, can contribute to addressing the obstacles confronted by developing countries through responsible business practices, such as respecting the principles of the United Nations Global Compact and taking action, including by mobilizing the resources needed to finance their sustainable development, and to realizing the internationally agreed development goals in developing countries,

Welcoming, in the context of enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all its relevant partners, including through multi-stakeholder partnerships, efforts to step up international cooperation and collaboration in science, research, technology and innovation on the basis of common interest and mutual benefit, focusing on the needs of developing countries and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Welcoming also the efforts and encouraging further efforts by all relevant partners, including the private sector, to engage as reliable and consistent partners in the development process and to take into account not only the economic and financial but also the developmental, social, human rights, gender and environmental implications of their undertakings, and, in general, towards implementing corporate social and environmental responsibility, that is, bringing such values and responsibilities to bear on their conduct and policies premised on profit incentives, in conformity with national laws and regulations,

Noting the principles and initiatives of the United Nations Global Compact, such as the Business for the Rule of Law Framework,

Recalling that multi-stakeholder partnerships and the resources, knowledge and ingenuity of the relevant stakeholders will be important in mobilizing and sharing knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, complementing the efforts of Governments and supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular in developing countries,

Recalling also the update of the Guidelines on a Principle-based Approach to the Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector, undertaken in order to ensure their full alignment with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework,[1]

Recalling further that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development acknowledges the roles and contributions of civil society, the scientific and

[1] A/HRC/17/31, annex.

technological community and non-governmental organizations, as well as other relevant international organizations, including international financial institutions and multilateral development banks, in advancing sustainable development,

Recalling that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also acknowledges that the implementation of sustainable development will depend on the active engagement of both the public and private sectors, and recognizing that the active participation of the private sector can contribute to the achievement of sustainable development,

Recalling also that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development supported national regulatory and policy frameworks that enable business and industry to advance sustainable development initiatives, including the important tool of public-private partnerships,

Recognizing the contributions of all relevant partners, including the private sector, in fostering stability and supporting recovery by creating job opportunities, advancing economic development, as well as infrastructure development, and, as appropriate, contributing to trust, reconciliation and security,

Noting that the financial and economic crisis, inter alia, has demonstrated the need for values and principles in business, including for sustainable business practices, social protection floors and the promotion of full and productive employment and decent work for all,

Reaffirming the principles of sustainable development, and underlining the global consensus reached on the key values and principles that will promote sustainable, fair, equitable and sustained economic development and that corporate social and environmental responsibility are important elements of that consensus,

Encouraging the private sector in the context of enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all its relevant partners to enhance its involvement in combating climate change,

Recognizing that a socially responsible private sector can contribute to the promotion of children's rights and education through relevant initiatives such as the Children's Rights and Business Principles and the Framework for Business Engagement in Education,

Recognizing also the unique position of the United Nations as a builder of bridges among countries and all stakeholders, and the progress achieved in the work of the United Nations on partnerships, notably in the framework of various United Nations organizations, agencies, funds, programmes, task forces, commissions and initiatives, and noting the establishment of partnerships at the field level entered into by various United Nations agencies, non-public partners and Member States, as well as multi-stakeholder partnerships,

Recalling that the high-level political forum on sustainable development will have a central role in overseeing follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level,

Stressing the importance of the high-level political forum on sustainable development in supporting the participation in follow-up and review processes by the major groups and other relevant stakeholders pursuant to resolution 67/290 of 9 July 2013, and calling on those actors to report on their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Recognizing the vital role that the United Nations Global Compact Office continues to play with regard to strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to partner strategically with the private sector, in accordance with its mandate from the General Assembly, to advance United Nations values and responsible business practices within the United Nations system and among the global business community,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector;[2]

2. *Stresses* that partnerships are voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both public and non-public, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and, as mutually agreed, to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits;

3. *Also stresses* the importance of the contribution of voluntary partnerships to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, while reiterating that they are a complement to, but not intended to substitute for, the commitment made by Governments with a view to achieving those Goals;

4. *Further stresses* that partnerships should be consistent with national laws and national development strategies and plans, as well as the priorities of countries where they are implemented, bearing in mind the relevant guidance provided by Governments;

5. *Emphasizes* the vital role played by Governments in promoting responsible business practices, including providing and ensuring enforcement of the necessary legal and regulatory frameworks in accordance with national legislation and development priorities, and invites them to continue to provide support to United Nations efforts to engage with the private sector, as appropriate;

6. *Recognizes* the vital role that the private sector plays in development, including through engaging in various partnership models and by generating decent employment and investment, giving access to and developing new technologies, offering technical vocational training activities and stimulating sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, with due consideration for non-discrimination, gender equality and women's empowerment, while bearing in mind the need to ensure that their activities conform fully with the principle of national ownership of development strategies;

7. *Welcomes* the growing number of businesses that embrace a core business model that takes account of the environmental, social and governance impacts of their activities, encourages and urges all businesses to adopt principles for responsible business and investing, and supports the work of the United Nations Global Compact in this regard;

8. *Recognizes* the importance of the various contributions of all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[3] and in this regard takes note of the important role that the Global Compact Local Networks will play in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and promoting poverty eradication and sustainable development through, inter alia, the exercise of corporate social responsibility;

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[2] A/70/296.

[3] Resolution 70/1.

9. *Welcomes* the intention of the Secretary-General to improve collaboration of the United Nations with all relevant partners, including the private sector, and to strengthen the capacities of the United Nations system, with a view to enhancing the results achieved through partnerships, and acknowledges the importance of continued consultations with Member States;

10. *Also welcomes* the commitment of the Secretary-General to continuing to retain the integrity and unique role of the United Nations Global Compact;

11. *Notes with appreciation* the initiatives of the Secretary-General, including the Sustainable Energy for All initiative, the Every Woman, Every Child initiative, the Global Education First Initiative, the Zero Hunger Challenge initiative and the Global Pulse initiative, while stressing the principles of transparency, coherence, impact, accountability and due diligence;

12. *Invites* the United Nations system, when considering partnerships, to seek to engage in a more coherent manner with private sector entities, including small and medium-sized enterprises, that support the core values of the United Nations, as reflected in the Charter of the United Nations and other relevant conventions and treaties, and that commit to the principles of the United Nations Global Compact by translating them into operational corporate policies, codes of conduct and management, monitoring and reporting systems;

13. *Stresses* the need for the United Nations system to develop, for those partnerships in which it participates, a common and systemic approach which places greater emphasis on transparency, coherence, impact, accountability and due diligence, without imposing undue rigidity in partnership agreements;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in this regard, in collaboration with funds and programmes, the specialized agencies and other relevant United Nations entities and mechanisms:

(*a*) To implement the Guidelines on a Principle-based Approach to the Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector, including from a gender perspective;

(*b*) To disclose the partners, contributions and matching funds for all relevant partnerships, including at the country level;

(*c*) To strengthen due diligence and risk management measures that can safeguard the reputation of the Organization and ensure confidence-building;

(*d*) To ensure that these elements are coherently reflected in the reporting of partnership activities by the United Nations funds, programmes and, as appropriate, agencies to their respective governing bodies;

(*e*) To ensure that these elements are reflected in system-wide reports and in the reports on initiatives of the Secretary-General to be submitted for the consideration of Member States;

15. *Recognizes* the contribution of partnerships to the realization of the goals and programmes of the Organization, and in this regard requests the Economic and Social Council to hold, during its partnership forum in 2016, a discussion on the best practices and ways to improve, inter alia, transparency, accountability and the sharing of experiences of multi-stakeholder partnerships and on the review and monitoring of these partnerships, including the role of Member States in the review and monitoring process;

16. *Underlines*, in this context, the importance of integrity measures as taken and advocated by the United Nations Global Compact;

17. *Encourages* the United Nations funds and programmes to continue to actively engage with other stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and foundations, with a view to diversifying potential sources of funding, especially core funding, for their operational activities for development, in alignment with the core principles of the United Nations development system and with full respect for the national priorities of programme countries;

18. *Recognizes* that these partnerships should give priority to core resources, while noting the need to make non-core resources from partners flexible and aligned with strategic plans and national priorities;

19. *Requests* the United Nations Global Compact to promote the Women's Empowerment Principles and to encourage the Global Compact Local Networks to create awareness of the many ways in which business can promote gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community, and encourages the private sector to contribute to advancing gender equality;

20. *Acknowledges* the importance of corporate sustainability reporting, encourages companies, where appropriate, especially publicly listed and large companies, to consider integrating sustainability information into their reporting cycle, encourages industry, interested Governments and relevant stakeholders, with the support of the United Nations system, as appropriate, to develop models for best practice and to facilitate action for the integration of sustainability reporting, taking into account experiences from already existing frameworks and paying particular attention to the needs of developing countries, including for capacity-building, and welcomes in this context the collaboration of the United Nations Global Compact with the Global Reporting Initiative and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to promote effective implementation of the Guidelines on a Principle-based Approach to the Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector;

22. *Encourages* the international community to strengthen global partnerships for the integration and implementation in partnerships of the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization and the call for action on youth employment, in accordance with national plans and priorities;

23. *Invites* the academic, research and scientific communities to contribute to the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in this regard recognizes the important role of the United Nations Academic Impact, among other initiatives, and encourages it to play an important and growing role in fostering global citizenship, filling knowledge gaps and facilitating better understanding of the core principles and activities of the United Nations;

24. *Stresses* the importance of developing national strategies for the promotion of sustainable and productive entrepreneurial activities through partnerships, and encourages Governments to create a climate that is conducive to increasing the number of women entrepreneurs and the size of their businesses;

25. *Notes with appreciation* the convening of the annual United Nations Private Sector Forum, which, in 2015, focused on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals;

26. *Encourages* the private sector and the Global Compact Local Networks to join the United Nations Global Compact "Business for Peace" platform and to seek to maximize the beneficial contributions to peace and development while minimizing the risks of negative impacts on both business and society in conflict-affected countries;

27. *Recognizes* the work of the Global Compact Local Networks, as well as the importance of cooperation between the United Nations system at the local level and the Global Compact Local Networks, to support, as appropriate and in a manner complementary to existing networks, the coordination and application of global partnerships locally;

28. *Also recognizes* that the Global Compact Local Networks provide an avenue for diffusing United Nations values and principles and facilitating partnerships with business on a broad scale;

29. *Acknowledges* the establishment of the United Nations private sector focal points network, promoting greater coherence and capacity-building within the Organization on activities involving business and disseminating innovations in engagement across the system, as well as the holding of annual meetings of United Nations system private sector focal points, which remain important forums for the exchange of best practices, lessons learned and innovations in partnerships with the private sector;

30. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session the item entitled "Towards global partnerships", unless otherwise agreed in the discussions on the revitalization of the Second Committee.

81st plenary meeting
22 December 2015